

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4405

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1750

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CH

SUBJECT: SHUI HU CHUAN--THE LONG OR THE SHORT OF IT

REF: HONG KONG 10354

1. REFTTEL INQUIRED WHETHER LIKE THE PRC EDITION OF "SHUI HU" SOLD IN HONG KONG, THE ONE SOLD IN PEKING ALSO RUNS 70 CHAPTERS, OR WHETHER THE LONGER EDITION IS ALSO AVAILABLE HERE. AT THE MOMENT IT APPEARS THAT NEITHER VERSION IS AVAILABLE, THE FULL VERSION, WE UNDERSTAND, HAS LONG BEEN QUITE RARE. HOWEVER, THE OFFICIAL WORD RECEIVED THROUGH A USLO LOCAL EMPLOYEE IS THAT THE FULL (120 CHAPTER) VERSION WILL BE PRINTED "SOON." APPARENTLY THE PUBLISHING HOUSES WERE NOT GIVEN ENOUGH ADVANCE NOTICE TO HAVE IT OUT IN TIME FOR THE CAMPAIGN'S LAUNCHING.

2. ONE OF THE CRITICISMS OF THE SHORT (71 CHAPTER) VERSION WHICH ENDS THE STORY ONLY A SHORT TIME AFTER THE DEATH OF CH'AO'KAI, IS THAT "JUST LIKE LIU SHAO-CHI AND LIN PIAO BEFORE THEY WERE THOROUGHLY EXPOSED, IT HAS A HIGHLY DECEITFUL NATURE AND SERVES TO UNDERMINE THE REVOLUTION FROM WITHIN." DESPITE THIS VIEW, HOWEVER, POLEMICISTS ARE FINDING IN THE SHORTER VERSION A FAIR

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AMOUNT OF MKODIAL TO ILLUSTRATE THE CHARGE THAT SUNG

CHIANG WAS NEVER ANYTHING BUT A CONFUCIONIST AND A
LQDDLORD-CLASS OPPORTUNIST WHO INTENDED ALL ALONG TO
SELL OUT THE PEASANT UPRISING. MOREOVER, ONE THEME
CURRENTLY BEING DEVELOPED FROM MATERIAL IN THE SHORTER
VERSION IS REMINISCENT OF MAO'S COMPLAINT SOME YEARS AGO
THAT LIU SHAO-CHI AND COMPANY HAD PUT HIM ON A
SHELF. THIS THEME IS THAT WHILE THE ORIGINAL AND TRULY
REVOLUTIONARY LEADER CH'AO KAI WAS STILL AROUND, SUNG
CHIANG POLITELY EASED CH'AO OUT OF AN ACTIVE LEADERSHIP
ROLE AND TOOK THE REAL POWER INTO HIS OWN HANDS.
THAYER

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